

SHORT CIRCUITS

Newsletter of the Kent County Amateur Radio Club

March 2025

Officers		Repeaters
President	Paul Tuley N3BUH	146.970 (-) 77hz pl Dover
Vice-President	Danny Clay N3WCB	146.910 (-) 77hz pl Camden
Secretary	Tim Reisinger KC3OO	147.300 (+) 77 hz pl N3YMS
Treasurer	John Snyder AB3JS	444.550 (+) 77hz pl Dover (down)
		442.450 (+) 127.3 hz pl Harrington
		443.200 (+) 156.7 hz pl Millsboro
		449.775 (-) 114.8 hz pl N3IOC Felton

Happenings

March 8	VE Testing, Wyoming Methodist Church, 09:00
March 9	Daylight Savings Time begins, set those clocks ahead
March 11	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
March 13	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:00
March 31	Emcomm Meeting, EOC, 19:00
April 8	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
April 10	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:00
April 13	CODEL Marathon, Rehoboth, more below
April 26	VE Testing, Wyoming Methodist Church, 09:00
April 26	Delmarva Hamfest, Georgetown, more info below
April 28	Emcomm Meeting, EOC, 19:00
May 8	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:00
May 13	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
May 26	Emcomm Meeting, EOC, 19:00
June 10	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
June 12	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:00
June 14	VE Testing, Wyoming Methodist Church, 09:00
June 28 – 29	ARRL Field Day, more info coming
June 30	Emcomm Meeting, EOC, 19:00
July 8	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
July 10	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:00
July 28	Emcomm Meeting, EOC, 19:00
August 12	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
August 14	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:00
August 25	Emcomm Meeting, EOC, 19:00
September 9	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
September 13	VE Testing, Wyoming Methodist Church, 09:00
September 11	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:00
September 29	Emcomm Meeting, EOC, 19:00
October 9	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:00
October 14	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
October 27	Emcomm Meeting, EOC, 19:00
November 11	Membership Meeting, Kent County EOC, 19:00
November 13	AUXCOMM Meeting, 19:00
November 24	Emcomm Meeting, EOC, 19:00
December 13	VE Testing, Wyoming Methodist Church, 09:00

Hamfests

- March 22 **FredFest 2025**
Frederick Amateur Radio Club
Independent Hose Company Social Hall, 310 Baughmans Lane, Frederick, MD 21701
Contact: Mike Forrence , K3MMM, PO Box 1260 Frederick, MD 21702
Phone: 240-409-1583 **Email:** K3MMM@arrl.net **Talk-In:** 146.74 (-) PL 141.3
- April 26 **Delmarva Amateur Radio and Electronics Expo, ARRL Delaware State Convention**
Sussex Amateur Radio Association
Cheer Center, 20520 Sand Hill Rd., Georgetown, DE 19947
Contact: Jamie Ashton , W3UC, 7446 Parker St Pittsville, MD 21850
Phone: 410-202-7690 **Email:** ashton@mchsi.com **Talk-In:** 147.090 156.7
- April 27 **Maryland Mobileers Spring Hamfest**
Maryland Mobileers Amateur Radio Club
Odenton Volunteer Fire Company, 1425 Annapolis Rd., Odenton, MD 21113
Contact: Bruce McPherson , AB3AC, 815 Quartz Flake Ct. Odenton, MD 21113
Phone: 410-456-2500 **Email:** BMCPHERSON73@VERIZON.NET
Talk-In:146.805 (-) PL 107.2
- May 3 **Hamfest At The Shore**
Old Barney Amateur Radio Club
Surf City Firehouse, 713 Long Beach Blvd., Surf City, NJ
Contact: Ira Hosid , N2WAA, PO Box 117 Manahawkin, NJ 08050
Phone: 201-741-5330 **Email:** ihosid@aol.com **Talk-In:** 146.835 (-) PL 127.3
- May 3 **The Great Hagerstown Hamfest**
Antietam Radio Association
Maugansville Bible Brethren Church, 17904 Binkley Avenue, Maugansville , MD 21767
Contact: Joseph Maguire , WA1ZZQ, 18711 Fountain Ter Hagerstown, MD 21742-2673
Phone: 972-965-9486 **Email:** maguirejb@gmail.com **Talk-In:** 147.09 (+) PL 100.0 Hz
- May 4 **Warminster ARC - Annual Hamfest, ARRL Eastern Pennsylvania Section Convention**
Warminster Amateur Radio Club
Bucks County Community College-Lower Bucks Campus, 1304 Veterans Highway (Route 413), Bristol, PA 19007 **Contact:** George Brechmann , N3HBT, PO Box 113, Warminster, PA 18974 **Phone:** 215-443-5656 **Email:** WARMRcinfo@gmail.com
Talk-In: 147.090 (+) PL131.8

More hamfests listed at www.arrl.org/hamfests. Check at the web site, or call the contact person, before going to any hamfest to make sure it has not been canceled, as many are and have been.

Editor's Comments

Something that will be happening sometime in the near future will be the requirement that any emcomm volunteer must have the basic ICS training. This is not hard to obtain, as is evident in the President's column below. Paul caught a combined ICS 100/700 course at DEMA recently. Sitting through the classroom version gives you the opportunity to ask questions, interact with other students, and possibly gain some new ideas. Every class I sat through was rewarding as I did pick up something I hadn't thought of before.

In the President's column and the club news section you will find links to the training calendar at DEMA. Courses there are free to amateur radio operators that will be, or might be, involved in emergency or public service communications. Since that is one of the reasons we have a license in the first place, that pretty much covers all of the licensed amateurs everywhere. Work on getting the "basic four", ICS 100, ICS 200, ICS 700 and ICS 800. You just might find some information that will be useful and helpful to you, and besides if you attend the person class you rub elbows with some of the people who will be in charge when the manure hits the ventilating system.

Talking about the ventilating system, public service events are a great way to practice skills that will be needed if we are called to assist the Counties. Practice is obtained using your radio, probably your HT which probably isn't used that often normally, in a net situation. How many of you regularly check into nets? And how many of those are different modes? There are VHF, DMR, SSB, digital, and CW nets on every week. Checking into more than one type gives you a different "view" of the procedures in each of those different nets.

A little history that might be of interest to someone. In the AUXCOMM column you will see a reference to a CERT team starting in Bay City, which is on Long Neck on the Rehoboth Bay. Bay City is a nice mobile home park which was started pretty much in 1955. At that time (when I was 4) my Mom and Dad were looking for a place near the water for vacations, and came upon the location. Dad and Paul Bahn (who I called Uncle Paul) obtained a lease from Mr. Hitchens for 20 years for lots near the water. The only places there at the time were two "hunting cabins", as duck and goose hunting was great in the area. The rest of the place was a farm. Dad obtained permission to dig a "lagoon" and the drudge that was used stuck a pine tree on the way in. It was a "Bay City" drudge, and the sign fell off. Dad found it and nailed it to the pine tree, and Bay City was named.

When the original lease expired, long after Dad's death, the rent went from \$45.00 per year to \$400.00, and after Mom died, I could not afford the price of the yearly lease, now near \$1000.00 when back then the minimum wage was less than \$2.00 per hour, and I sold the cottage Dad and Mom had built. The cottage is now gone, the lot we first had was empty the last time I looked, while working for Verizon, but there will be memories of many summers where I learned how to swim and where I first went deer and squirrel hunting. Great times!

For about eight years there were only six cottages and the two hunting cabins in Bay City, but soon more and more people found the place and it grew and grew and became what it is now. The places that once had a big deer population now have houses and where I killed my second deer is a street. But one thing I do remember is the "Storm of '62" where we lost the first trailer we put there to the flood, and many others lost their trailers and cottages also. For Bay City, and other of the mobile home parks in the area, change is another "Storm of '62" of that intensity to occur.

Having a CERT team at the mobile home park, with maybe AUXCOMM assistance, might just be able to provide help to those that might be affected by another such occurrence.

President's Column

Well, Ladies and Gentlemen, Spring is in the air. Along with that goes hamfest season. Hamcation has come and gone. The next up is our local Georgetown then Dayton. The manufacturers use the larger arenas to launch their latest and greatest.

With the warming weather POTA activities will increase. I've been talking to Eric Hudson about a combined POTA activation and Fox Hunt clinic at Killens Pond this Spring. More information to come.

Today I took a refresher course at DEMA, ICS 700/100 combined. It was eight hours of interaction and fellowship. A great class. The instructors did a wonderful job of presenting the material in a manner that it could be understood and retained. If you didn't know it, the classes are free and available to all interested. Their training calendar is available at www.dema.delaware.gov. If you have trouble sitting in front of your computer taking classes by yourself this is the way to go. You will be able to participate with a group and be able to ask questions about things you don't understand. Some of the material is so cut and dry you may feel as though you have grit in your eyes, but the class atmosphere removes most of the grit.

On another note, two weeks ago the club hosted a very interesting and informative DMR clinic at the EOC, Friday evening and Saturday. Nick N3YMS and John KA3LAO were our primary instructors.

Enjoy the warmer weather.
73 for now,
Paul Tuley

From the Section Manager's Shack

I am happy to report my ability, as well as the Division Director's ability, to email their groups will be back online within the next few days. The cyber attack has left some systems at ARRL HQ still out of service but most are back up. DXCC is still being done by hand but the work is being done. The ARRL website is back to normal operations as well as almost all email systems. The ARRL has improved the IT systems but employs an enterprise level operating system to ensure security. I will start sending my Section Manager monthly newsletter to all ARRL members via this email service when it comes back online. I encourage all licensees to join the ARRL Delaware Section groups.io reflector via the link below to get posts on classes, meetings, training, etc.

ARRL Delaware Section Youth Initiative Update

The average age of an amateur radio licensee? ~75 years old. The ARRL Delaware Section, in collaboration with QRZ and Gigaparts, has initiated the Delaware Section Youth Initiative aimed at fostering youth engagement in the Amateur Radio Service. So far three QRZ-1 Explorer radio kits have been given to school kids who have become technicians. Later this month a group of 37 kids will be tested and those that pass will be given the kits. This initiative will foster new members into the Amateur Radio Service. But his program is just the beginning. We must get these kids into our clubs to continue to engage them in the ARS. Assign knowledgeable mentors to assist them in their journey. We should encourage them to continue to upgrade to a general class license. Again, done by mentors but also by the club lending testing materials such as donated previously used books. Having a club library benefits all its members. The ARRL has initiatives to assist clubs in building their library.

Speaking of kids, the Lake Forest High School just started a new club; The Lake Forest Amateur Radio Club. The club has been assigned the callsign of KD3AME. The club has several donated radios, antenna, etc. to start their station. They had their first meeting last week which was very

productive. The club will eventually become a ARRL Affiliated club to join the ranks of other clubs in the section.

Sussex County ARES hosting in person WinLink class – March 22

Sussex County ARES is hosting a one-day class on the WinLink System. The class will be held on Saturday, March 22, 2025 at the Milton Library from 10:30 to about 2pm. The library is located at 121 Union Street, Milton. Class will be held in the “Blue Room” on the second floor. An elevator is available.

This class will cover the basics to starting an account to the lower end of intermediate usage covering such topics as the setup of the WinLink Express client software and creating an account, basic option selections, sending your first message via telnet, template availability and usage/storing, setup of radios and radio/equipment options, digipeating, equipment choices, running a Peer to Peer message, using a gateway running RMS Relay, housekeeping items such as creation/usage of personal and global folders, best message practices, setup contacts and group addresses, and many other topics.

Attendees should bring their own laptop (either personal or facility assigned) to get the most benefit from the class. We will have a group of experienced WinLink users, computer specialists, etc. on hand to assist with any setup issues. Bring your radios, Go Kits, etc. so we can get them working. Class size will be limited to about 14 due to space required for equipment. Gateways will be set up to demo their use via WinLink Sessions and using a gateway for digipeating. Contact me via my contact information below if you are interested in attending.

Intro to the ARRL – Part 2 – Sections and Divisions

The ARRL is made up of 15 divisions. Within these 15 divisions are 71 sections. We are part of the Atlantic Division which has seven sections; Eastern PA (EPA), Maryland-DC (MDC), Northern New York (NNY), Western New York (WNY), Western Pennsylvania (WPA), Southern New Jersey (SNJ), and Delaware (DE). The ATL DIV covers five US states, W2 & W3 USA callsign areas, 143 state counties, 111 ARES EmComm Teams, 244 Amateur Radio Groups, 13,796 ARRL/FCC licensed hams, 226 ARRL Affiliated clubs and hold more than 75 Field Day Sites. Currently the Delaware Section has 394 full ARRL Members and has about

1,766 licensed amateur radio operators and seven active clubs. Each division is run by an elected Division Director who is elected and holds a three-year term. Each division also has a Vice Director who can stand in for an absent director and can vote during Director absences or in conflict-of-interest situations. Vice Directors are elected at the same time as directors. Each section is led by an elected Section Manager who is responsible for keeping in touch with clubs, attending club meetings, Hamfest, choosing personnel to fill various jobs within the section. A description of the various positions that assist the Section Manager and fill by appointments can be found under Field Organization on the ARRL website. Section Managers do not receive a salary but are reimbursed for expenses like mileage, meals and lodging incurred during activities that support ham radio in their section. Delaware has a section budget of just over \$1,200 which is usually gone inside the first half of the budget year. The budget money comes from the dues you pay as ARRL members. I do my best to keep in touch with all Amateur Radio Service licensees, not just ARRL members. I do this by attending club meetings to answer questions, disseminate information on the ARRL and Section programs, etc. I also run the ARRL Delaware Section groups.io forum to help me in my duties. This forum has not only the information I disseminate at meetings, etc. but also a section calendar and many common files I am requested to provide. I participate in many zoom meetings per month. This includes the ARRL Field Organization Section Manager meetings, ATL DIV meetings, ARESMAT (Amateur Radio Emergency Service Mutual Assistance Team), training and other informational meetings. I spend about 20-25 hours a week on Section Manager duties which does not include my personal radio adventures. I drive well over 200 miles a month to attend meetings and other events. Next month we will end this series on the ARRL with publications, additional membership stats, annual reports, etc.

Upcoming Events & Contests

- International DX - Phone – March 1-2, to encourage W/VE stations to expand knowledge of DX propagation on the HF and MF bands, improve operating skills, and improve station capability by

creating a competition in which DX stations may only contact W/VE stations. This contest period is Phone-only. Use only the 160, 80, 40-, 20-, 15-, and 10-meter bands.

- Sussex ARES WinLink Class – March 22, Milton Library. Basics cover the WinLink System, creating an account, sending both RF and Telnet messages, templates, connections with radio using gateways, digipeating, etc. Limited class size. Contact Steven Keller, KC3DSO, via [kc3dso@gmail](mailto:kc3dso@gmail.com) if interested.
- Delaware Radio Electronics EXPO, Delaware State Convention & HAMFEST - Saturday, April 26, 2025, Cheer Community Center, Georgetown, DE. Lots of new and used radio gear, HRO, tailgating, food, FCC testing, and presentations which include “Deployment to NC” during hurricane Helene and “Starlink for EmComm” presentation and demo. Visit www.radioelectronicsexpo.com for more information.

Visit contests.arrl.org or www.contestcalendar.com for details on these and upcoming contests.

A Warm Welcome to Our Newest & Upgrading Members

Join me in welcoming the latest additions to our vibrant community:

- Earl D. Lilly Jr., KC3DHN
- Christopher T. Roth, KC3EKH
- Thomas A. Perry, KC3FAU
- Rocco J. Rocco, KD3AOR
- Cody Baker, KD3APM
- Paxton P. Buonocore, KD3APR
- Rodney Baker, KD3ARL
- David E. Koster, KD3ARN
- Nicholas R. Hensler, KD3ARO
- Susan Hensler, KD3ARP
- Jenna Davis, KD3ARQ
- Aadi Bhartia, KD3ART
- Stephen DiGirolamo, KD3ARV

Engage our new radio operators!

As we wrap up this edition of our newsletter, we encourage each of you to take the next step in your amateur radio journey. Whether it's participating in local events, experimenting with new technologies, or mentoring a newcomer, your involvement makes a difference. Let's continue to share our passion, expand our skills, and strengthen our community. Together, we can keep the spirit of amateur radio alive and thriving. Stay active, stay curious, and keep the airwaves buzzing!

73,

Steven Keller

Delaware Section Manager

The Emcomm Corner

One of the things that is emphasized to new ham radio operators is the need to listen on a frequency before transmitting on that frequency. The obvious reason is to make sure that someone else is not using that frequency. In many cases it is appropriate to ask if the frequency is in use. If someone is using the frequency it is common courtesy to not step on his transmission. On the amateur radio bands, no one owns a frequency, it is equal access within the legal constraints of your license.

There is another reason to listen first – there should be noise. You should be able to hear some noise especially on the high frequency bands. If there is no noise maybe there is a problem with your antenna – or maybe no antenna at all! Modern transistor transmitters are wonderful pieces of engineering but they have an aversion to running without antennas and some will self destruct letting out “magic smoke”. The result is a trip to the repair shop or sometimes the dump if repair parts are not available.

That happened during winter field day recently when the operator thought a radio had an antenna attached and it didn't. One fried radio. Always check that an antenna is connected, especially when using an unfamiliar setup or when multiple people are involved in the setup like field day. Our radios are essential to our support of the Department of Public Safety so keep them happy with an antenna.

Jim KC3BTV
Emergency Coordinator

AUXCOMM News

I replied to the editor when his note of "column due by the end of the week" appeared in my inbox, "What, already? Seems like I just finished the last one!" Oh well, February is a short month, and that also means March and spring are coming, and that's before my next column is due. March can be an interesting month, weather wise. Caesar didn't think much of the warning he got to "beware the Ides of March", but y'all better watch out for some very windy conditions.

AUXCOMM has been busy with administrivia and such as we continue to settle into the new way of doing what we do at EOC. The Management Team is being expanded as we add 'backup' to functioning positions. This month we have added Jessica Labosky, KC3ZIY, Deputy Admin Section Lead, and Judith (Judi) Carter KC3ZZO, Deputy CERT. Judi is also the newly appointed Program Manager for the county's CERT Program. More on that below.

A site for Summer Field Day is being evaluated as I write this. We're hoping to hear back before the next column has to be laboriously produced. It will be in a general public setting promoting both Amateur Radio and the county's CERT program. The operating style will be much the same as we did for Winter Field Day, a teaching/learning experience with a lot of "Show and Tell". We are going to repeat the success we had with Winter Field Day.

Also new in the works is a low power repeater for the Rehoboth area to be used for the growing number of events the AUXCOMM Group gets involved with. The next one is the CODEL on April 13th, get with Bill Saunders, N3ID, to volunteer your services. Send an email to ws3eoc@gmail.com with CODEL2025 in the subject line. This is primarily an HT event, and a great opportunity to do "bicycle mobile" on the trails of Cape Henlopen State Park. Want to try it, but new to public service operation? Let Bill know in your email and you will get teamed with a mentor.

We started with great enthusiasm to establish a new Digital Node in south-eastern Sussex County. Like Caesar who had a funny thing happen to him on the way to the Forum, we found a few issues we didn't count on along the way, and are working through them one by one. One or two are going to require a 'wee bit' of creativity. Stay tuned for updates!

The CERT program administrative team has been busy over the last several weeks. Planning for the first of two Basic CERT classes is underway. The first will be April 4, 5, 6. With three hours Friday evening, and a very full two days, Saturday and Sunday, the students shouldn't be bored. We will be using the Paramedic Training facilities at the Sussex EOC and the Delaware State Fire School Annex in Georgetown. With exceptional facilities and great instructors (five on the roster including two new ones) it should be a great learning experience. There are 23 student spots for the class. If you have an interest in getting your Basic CERT certificate, send an email to sussexcountyde.cert@gmail.com and request a student registration.

Then we had the January Statewide CERT Committee meeting that ended with the approval of the new State CERT Guidance document, dictating how the program will function across the state's three counties and the City of Wilmington. That was the culmination of months of work. It provides practical guidance for the management of the community CERT teams under county and city sponsorship. Sussex is adopting and adapting to the requirements. The addition of Judi as Program Manager is taking

a load off of me, particularly in the planning areas. She has hit the ground running, showing initiative and creativity. Her addition to the Management Team is in line with the cooperative interaction we are developing between AUXCOMM and CERT.

The Community CERT Program continues to grow in Sussex with a new start-up team forming in Bay City Mobile Home Park. That will bring us to five active teams in the county. It's also been interesting to see the several local Hams that have joined the effort. There have been a number of members from the county teams that have started working with the AUXCOMM Group operators at events. This is something we hope to continue to grow. For multiple reasons we are deploying teams of at least two where we can in the events we support.

Later, 73
John K3PFW

Club Happenings

Training Available

Did you know that DEMA offers training on many interesting, and sometimes, required subjects? DEMA will hold in person classes for basic courses required to operate in exercises and real life incidents. It is coming that any volunteer at all locations will be required to have basic ICS training, or the County, or State, could risk losing any Federal funds associated with that event. Many different subjects are offered and all training to ARES, RACES, or AUXCOMM personnel is given at no charge. A list of coming classes is available at: <https://dema.delaware.gov/training/dema/index.shtml?dc=demaTrainingCalendar>

CW Nets Available

There has been some talk about learning traffic handling using CW. There is a great net available for just that purpose. The Maryland Slow Net (MSN) meets most days on 3563 KHz at 7:30 local time, and the net control will slow to YOUR speed when you check in. Available on the net are practice radiograms that outline a part of traffic handling in the text of the practice radiogram. Again, the practice radiograms are sent at your speed, so even new people have the opportunity to learn something about traffic handling while getting practice receiving radiograms.

So if you're new to CW and to traffic handling, here is an opportunity to get both at the same time. Check out (pun intended) the MSN at 7:30 on 3563 KHz.

Did You Know?

ARRL Members can insure their amateur radio gear and related equipment including antennas and towers with coverage through our partnership with Risk Strategies. Only a \$50 deductible applies! They offer a great rate of \$1.40 per \$100 of equipment covered. Liability insurance is also available to ARRL Affiliated Clubs. To learn more or to submit your application visit the ARRL Insurance Center at www.arrlinsurance.com

Did You Know?

Teaching an amateur radio licensing class takes hard work and dedication. That's why ARRL supports instructors through our National Instructor Program. The program offers ARRL-registered instructors discounts on designated instruction materials to assist you in the classroom. We'll also add you to our e-mail list to share resources, activities, and advice from ARRL National Instructor Gordon West, WB6NOA. Members can register at www.arrl.org/License-instructor-registration.

Useless Facts of the Month

Armadillo shells are bulletproof. (So hide behind one if being shot at!!!!)

February 2, 1887

Groundhog Day was celebrated for the first time. (The beginning of modern weather forecasting??)

The U.S. didn't install the 911 emergency number until 1968. (It is a great idea!!!)

1.5 million people call in sick to work the Monday after the Super Bowl. (I don't have to, I'm retired!!!)

The "My Way" singer was buried his way, with a bottle of Jack Daniel's whiskey, a pack of Camel cigarettes, a Zippo lighter, and a dollar's worth of dimes. The dimes were reportedly in case he needed to use a pay phone. Known for his deep affection for Jack Daniel's, Sinatra once declared, "I'm for anything that gets you through the night, be it prayer, tranquilizers, or a bottle of Jack Daniel's," and often referred to it as the "nectar of the gods." In honor of this enduring connection, Jack Daniel's later created a premium whiskey named Sinatra Select.

In the United States, "Second Street" holds the title of the most common street name. This isn't because "First Street" is overlooked; quite often this street is named something more distinctive, such as "Main Street," causing "Second Street" to take the lead in overall frequency. Nationwide, according to U.S. Census data, there are 10,866 Second Streets, followed closely by 10,131 Third Streets, backed up by 9,898 First Streets. Park seems to be more popular than Main, as there are 8,926 Park Streets, compared to 7,644 Main Streets.

Dogs see the world differently from humans due to their dichromatic vision, meaning they can only perceive shades of blue and yellow. Unlike humans, who have three types of color receptors (cones) in their eyes, dogs have only two, limiting their ability to distinguish a full range of colors. Their vision is similar to that of a person with red-green color blindness, causing reds and greens to appear as muted shades of gray or brown. As a result, objects in blue and yellow hues stand out clearly to dogs, while red or green objects will blend into the background.

Tidbit of Information of the Month Department

Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act Reintroduced

02/07/2025

Legislation Will Increase Communication Options During Natural Disasters

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senators Roger Wicker, R-Miss., and Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., and Representatives August Pfluger, R-Tex., and Joe Courtney, D-Conn. announced their joint re-introduction of legislation in the Senate and House to restore the right to Amateur Radio operators to install the antennas necessary to serve their communities. Homeowner association rules often prevent Amateur Radio operators from installing antennas at their homes even though Amateur Radio has proven to be essential in emergencies and natural disasters such as hurricanes when other means of communication fail.

"Mississippians should have access to every possible means of warning for natural disasters, including amateur radio operators. In an emergency, those warnings can mean the difference between life and death," Senator Wicker said. "The Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act would remove unnecessary roadblocks that could help keep communities safe during emergencies like tornadoes, hurricanes, and fires."

“When disaster strikes, amateur radio operators provide vital, often life-saving information, which shouldn’t be hindered by prohibitive rules or confusing approval processes. The Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act eliminates obstacles for ham radio enthusiasts, allowing them to continue their communications and serve their communities in the face of emergencies,” said Senator Blumenthal.

“Natural disasters and other emergency situations that hinder our regular lines of communication are unfortunately unavoidable, which is why we must bolster our emergency preparedness by removing the barriers amateur radio operators often run into when installing antennas. Amateur radio plays a vital role in public safety by delivering critical information to people at all times. My district is home to dozens of amateur radio operators ready to volunteer in the event of an emergency, and I am proud to lead this legislation,” said Congressman August Pfluger.

“As we know from recent natural disasters, amateur radio operators in Connecticut can be a critical component of disaster response and emergency management. It is in our communities’ best interest that we give them the capabilities to operate at the highest level, and with the re-introduction of this bill, we’ve taken a strong step in that direction,” said Congressman Courtney.

Background:

The Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act of 2025 (H.R. 1094 and S. 459) would require homeowner associations to accommodate the needs of FCC-licensed Amateur Radio operators by prohibiting the enforcement of private land use restrictions that ban, prevent, or require the approval of the installation or use of Amateur Radio station antennas. Homeowner associations have often prevented installation and use of such antennas through private land use restrictions. This has hindered voluntary training for emergency situations and blocked access to necessary communications when disaster strikes.

Among other provisions, this legislation would:

- Prohibit homeowner association rules that would prevent or ban Amateur Radio antennas;
- Specify an approval process for installing Amateur Radio antennas;
- Provide a Federal private right of action to Amateur Radio operators in disputed cases.

On behalf of America’s Amateur Radio licensees, Rick Roderick, the President of The American Radio Relay League, re-confirmed the ARRL’s full support for the passage of the Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act of 2025 and extended his thanks and appreciation to Senators Wicker and Blumenthal and Congressmen Pfluger and Courtney for their unflagging leadership of the bi-partisan effort to support and protect the rights of all Amateur Radio Operators.

The text of the Senate and House bills can be found at www.congress.gov and put H.R.1094 or S.3690 in the search box.

Thanks to ARRL News

Did Parks on the Air (POTA) Save Ham Radio?

Posted by Mark Haverstock, K8MSH on February 7, 2025 at 2:17 pm

Several months ago I saw a non-ham friend at the park. During our chat, he happened to look at the call sign license plate on my SUV. “Ham radio? Are people still doing that?” he asked. I assured him that ham radio isn’t dead, or even on life support. Today there are more licensed amateurs than ever, and many different activities are available to satisfy a wide variety of interests for people of all ages. One of the more popular activities is POTA.

What is POTA?

POTA (Parks on the Air®) is a great activity for ham radio enthusiasts. Operating radios in public parks is a fun way to combine outdoor adventures with making radio contacts across the globe. It's a popular choice for many amateur radio operators who enjoy portable operations with minimal equipment and setup.

It's an offshoot of activities like Summits on the Air (SOTA), where licensed hams operate temporarily from mountainous locations. SOTA was originally launched in Great Britain in 2002. OSPOTA (Ohio State Parks on the Air) was established in 2008 and is sponsored by the Portage County Amateur Radio Service of Ravenna, Ohio. POTA also has roots in the World Wide Flora and Fauna (WWFF) program, which began in 2012 to encourage amateur radio operators to operate portable from protected nature areas.

In 2016, the ARRL ran a one-year event called National Parks on the Air (NPOTA), which gained significant popularity. The success of NPOTA led to the formation of POTA as a separate entity from WWFF. POTA has since grown into a wildly successful program, continuing to promote portable operations from parks and protected areas worldwide. A nonprofit organization was founded in 2018 to continue POTA permanently. POTA's planners did it right—they made radio operation approachable to anyone. You don't have to carry on a conversation or spend too much time stressing over everything. POTA does not require a formal exchange, just call sign, signal reports, and park location. Name and other exchanges are optional. Call, then respond, and you've got a QSO for your log. Simple indeed!

The POTA station operator, known as an activator, puts out a CQ POTA call and waits for other stations, called hunters, to respond. You won't wait long if you "advertise" your activation. Post your activation plan on the POTA activation page and it will automatically keep you on the POTA spot page with your up-to-date frequency when using CW or Digital modes. You can also use spotting sites like DX Summit or DX Watch to let other hams know you're on the air. Announcing your activation plan through social media such as Facebook, X, and other sites can help you produce even more QSOs. The post should include your call sign, approximate times, frequencies, some station details, etc. Allow the hunters enough lead time to find you. Anyone can do POTA with almost any transceiver, from a low-power QRP rig to a 100-watt radio. A simple dipole, end-fed, or vertical antenna is sufficient to make local and even DX contacts. It's a great way to not only get a taste of HF operation but also make a game of radio in a way that keeps it interesting. You can easily get hooked.

POTA is set up so only the activator station submits a log. Logs for hunters are optional. You can register on the POTA website to see the contacts that the activators have submitted for you.

POTA Fans

There are many advantages to POTA participation. Imagine the low noise floor when you escape the RFI typically found in cities and suburbs. Apartment dwellers and those with HOA restrictions can freely set up antennas outdoors—within reason, of course. And don't forget the benefits of fresh air and sunshine. Here's a random collection of comments made by amateurs on various forums, including Reddit, QRZ, and others.

- "I just did a dual park and had a blast. It's addicting and I don't even know why."
- "POTA is secret-sauce level, reinvigorating a new generation to HF radio IMO."
- "POTA is helping keep ham radio alive IMHO. I'm a big SOTA fan as well."
- "I tend to hunt from home, but the real fun is schlepping my stuff to parks."
- "It's like Field Day every weekend!"
- "I'm having more conversations about ham radio than ever now that I'm hanging out in parks with my radio gear. A few weeks ago, a guy wandered up as I was operating. He says, 'Is that Parks on the Air?' My jaw dropped."

Saving Amateur Radio?

POTA didn't do it alone, but it helped create more interest. Along with digital modes, code-free licenses, emergency communications, public service opportunities, and numerous other activities, POTA has helped breathe new life into the hobby. What could be better than setting up shop in a park, firing up a radio, and making some contacts in the great outdoors, enjoying the fresh air and change of scenery?

Your POTA activation is also an opportunity to showcase ham radio to the public. People are genuinely interested and ask questions. Of course, they want to know what we're doing with all the radio equipment, and it gives you an opportunity to share the experience. New hams will also visit, wanting to see your activation and learn more about things they can do with amateur radio. Sending CQ POTA seems to attract calls—not as much as a rare DX station, but enough to keep you busy and improve your operating skills. Interested? Check out ARRL's *The Parks on the Air Book* and the official POTA website for the complete story.

Thanks to On All Bands

Don't Forget the Ionosphere

Q Kishh Galnimbkar, VU2MZT, asks: I have an Icom IC-7300 and installed a fan dipole to cover 40 and 20 meters. I have an odd problem — other hams tell me that my signal starts to fade out, and I receive signal reports saying there is QSB on my signal. What is wrong?

A QSB means a signal is fading and then returning, sometimes rapidly or slowly, and sometimes it fades away altogether. It has nothing to do with your radio. Rather, it's strictly a function of the ionosphere.

The F region of the ionosphere, the workhorse layer that carries much of ham radio DX, is an incredibly thin layer of atmosphere at a height above sea level from 100 to 500 miles (150 to 800 kilometers). The pressure in the F region is a hard vacuum for many purposes. Satellites, including the International Space Station, orbit in the F region. Although the vacuum at this altitude is nearly complete, there's just enough air left to slow down satellites.

Although the amount of air (mostly nitrogen and oxygen) is incredibly tiny, it is particularly affected by ionizing radiation from the sun. These are ultraviolet, x-ray, and cosmic-ray radiation. These highly energetic waves turn the ionosphere into a plasma — a combination of positively charged oxygen and nitrogen missing one or more of their outer electrons, plus a vast sea of negatively charged electrons. The Earth has a strong magnetic field, so these charged particles move around at high speeds in unusual paths. The movement of charged particles is an electric current. Because the index of refraction for radio waves varies widely throughout this constantly changing ionosphere, radio waves from our transmitters are scattered everywhere. However, this turmoil is not a hopeless situation. The ionosphere has been studied for more than 100 years now, and much is predictable. When conditions are good, our signals continue to be refracted to those we're talking to. Because the ionosphere is not smooth, our signals can have multiple paths to the receiving station. Sometimes, these reinforce the signal, and sometimes, they cancel it. It is the latter effect that we refer to as fading. As a new ham gains experience with HF, it's possible to get an idea of the right time to be on the air, and there are numerous propagation predictions on the internet (for example, see www.voacap.com).

Sunspots look dark compared to the rest of the sun, but they're busy churning out ionizing radiation. During periods of high solar activity (many sunspots and other phenomena), the ionosphere is charged even more. It can provide stunning signal paths that are clear to the other side of the Earth. When a formerly clear signal starts its fading cycle, it's usually time to say "73" and move to other stations.

Thanks to QST Q&A

Amateur Radio Licenses During A Government Shutdown

This article covers how a United States government shutdown affects amateur radio licensing in the US and its territories. On the day before the 2024 winter solstice, Ebenezer Scrooge and the Grinch, working with the United States Congress, brought the US on the edge of a government shutdown, although some would consider the term "government shutdown" as redundant (hi hi). At this typing (Dec. 20, 2024), it appeared that a shutdown was imminent, and if it does occur, no one knows how long the political brinkmanship will last, but with Congress to leave town on holiday break, it meant a shutdown until at least until early January, 2025, at the minimum.

During a government shutdown, while most amateur radio organizations, clubs, etc., will remain operational, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is CLOSED (along with numerous other federal agencies). This means that the FCC will NOT process things like new, renewed, or upgraded amateur radio licenses, or sequential or vanity call sign changes. Applications for license renewals or callsign requests can be done via the ULS, and the \$35 fee will have to be paid to the FCC (the fee doesn't apply to license upgrades or sequential call sign change requests), but the actual applications will NOT be acted upon until after the government shutdown ends, and the FCC reopens...and it could take awhile for that to occur...especially if a huge backlog builds up. The one "callsign exception" is the Special Event Station 1x1 callsigns, such as N5Z -- these are handled by ARRL/VEC, and are only valid during that Special Event Station. Issuance of these is NOT affected by a "government shutdown".

While Volunteer Examiner (VE) Teams could still conduct exam sessions, results sent to the various Volunteer Examiner Coordinators (VEC's) cannot be sent to the FCC for processing, until the government shutdown ends. At an exam session, those applying for a new license, whether they are starting from scratch, having never had an amateur radio license; or getting back into the hobby, because their previous license expired, and they didn't renew during the two-year grace period, will have an extended wait to get their call sign and license, and it's all dependent on how long the government shutdown lasts.

For those who already have a license and a call sign, if they upgrade, they can stay on the air, using the special temporary suffix identifier, when operating on the new bands that they have just gained by passing the upgrade exam. However, the certificate of successful completion of examination (CSCE) is only good for 365 days. Thankfully, the longest government shutdown has only been 35 days...but when there is "massive political gridlock", all bets are off.

Amateur radio operators in the United States and its territories can renew their licenses from 90 days before, to 2 years after the license expiration; but they can modify the license for changing their name, mailing or email address, etc., at any time. If mail sent to them from the FCC is returned as undeliverable, their license can be suspended or revoked. Some organizations will send a reminder notification to members when their license enters the "renewal window"...and I believe that the ARRL, the Quarter Century Wireless Association (QCWA), and Courage Kenny HandiHams, all do this for their members...but I'm not sure of any others. Once the ham radio license expires, several things happen, as follows: They can no longer operate on the air, whether for contesting, DXing, rag chewing, signal testing, etc. They can no longer serve as a Volunteer Examiner. If they do serve at a session with an expired license, it INVALIDATES EVERYTHING at the session, and examinees will have to retake the exams, and pay the fees again. That likely will leave a bad taste in everyone's mouths. Their ham radio club or organization membership, regular or life, expires. Then, you may have to pay a fee to rejoin the organization. If an Amateur Radio license recently has expired or is about to expire, the licensee can apply for license renewal via the ULS and continue to operate while the FCC is closed. The filed application will remain in limbo until the FCC returns to work. Licensees who wait until the FCC reopens to apply then will have ONLY 2 DAYS to submit a renewal application before the license is considered to have expired in the FCC database.

Looking at the QRZ website, under expired call signs, it has three groups. Call signs that will expire in the next 30 days, call signs that expired within the last 30 days, and call signs about to be forfeited. The number of expiring or expired or about to be forfeited call signs from the US and its territories, is STAGGERING!! Once your license expires, you can no longer transmit on the air, but you have a 2-year grace period to renew without loss of call sign or operating privileges. However, if you do nothing during that grace period, your call sign, license, and operating privileges are forfeited; and it's as if you never had taken an amateur radio license exam. Years ago, if you were a 20 word per minute Amateur Extra Class licensee, you had to retake the 5, 13, and 20 word per minute Morse code exam; plus the Novice, Technician, General, Advanced, and Amateur Extra written exams.

Now, if your license lapses, you would have to take, at minimum, the Technician class written exam. With a recent rule change, if you previously held a General, or Amateur Extra class license, you would bring a copy of that license to the exam session, and once passing the Technician exam, would be granted a CSCE for either a General or Amateur Extra Class license. Previous Advanced Class licensees are downgraded to General, as the FCC stopped issuing the Novice and Advanced Class licenses in April, 2000; but holders of these can still renew them at the appropriate time. With a new or renewed license, you still have to pay the FCC \$35. Then, if you want to try to get your former call sign back as a vanity call sign, you would have to pay the FCC another \$35. And, if you had a prized call sign, there is a chance that you may not get it back!! And as noted, if there's a government shutdown, there is a DELAY on receiving your license and callsign. Before the FCC ULS, one had to wait several weeks to get their amateur radio license. Now, they can get their license in as little as 3 days after the exam session, especially if the VE Team can upload the exam results to their VEC electronically, after the session. However, all bets are off during the government shutdown. In closing, if you do not know when your amateur radio license expires, check it now!! I guarantee you that if your driver's license expires, and you're pulled over by law enforcement, they will not be very accommodating to you.

Submitted by: Daryl Stout, N5VLZ, University of Arkansas at Little Rock Ham Radio Club VE Team Leader

Thanks to QCWA Journal

Bill Ackman, Dropbox Leave Delaware as Corporations Pull Out

Billionaires and Big-Tech companies are fleeing Delaware in such droves, Newsweek said the state faces an "exodus" of major corporations. After reports over the weekend that Facebook's Meta was considering moving its incorporation from Delaware to Texas, billionaire Bill Ackman tweeted he will move his financial management company out of the Diamond State. "We are reincorporating our management company in Nevada for the same reason. Top law firms are recommending Nevada and Texas over Delaware," Ackman wrote.

Ackman is not alone in the exodus. Big Tech's Dropbox revealed in a shareholder resolution that it was moving from Delaware to Nevada.

And Coinbase chief legal officer Paul Grewal warned on X that "Delaware is at serious risk of losing its standing as the leading state of incorporation for American companies." Once corporate-friendly Delaware has become an activist, DEI state in recent years with one non partial judges using their gavel to penalize Big Business and political conservatives.

After seeing a Democrat judge move to block his shareholder-approved Tesla compensation package of \$56 billion, Musk moved Tesla and SpaceX's incorporation to Texas. His biotech company Neuralink was moved from Delaware to Nevada. On X, Musk stated, "Never incorporate your company in the state of Delaware."

The home state of former President Joe Biden, Delaware has come under criticism for its close ties to the Biden family and its political agenda. Last year, The Wall Street Journal published an article, co-written by former Attorney General William Barr, lambasting Delaware for embracing far-left

environmental, social, and governance policies and attempting to push them on corporations. Viet Dinh, former Fox News chief legal counsel, also complained the network was forced into an unprecedented \$787 million settlement with a voting company over its reports relating to the 2020 election. Dinh complained that the court had failed to apply standard libel law with rulings that "called into question the fundamental fairness and integrity of the Delaware civil justice system."

Thanks to NewsMax on line

Joke of the Month

Long Winded

There was this lady who was visiting a church one Sunday. The sermon seemed to go on forever, and many in the congregation fell asleep.

After the service, to be social, she walked up to a very sleepy looking gentleman, extended her hand in greeting, and said, "Hello, I'm Gladys Dunn."

And the gentleman replied, "You're not the only one ma'am, I'm glad it's done too!!"

Quote of the Month

"Everything seems to slow down with age, except the time it takes cake and ice cream to reach your hips."

Elizabeth Taylor